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# JEWISH TRACT

ON THE

Fifty-third Chapter of Isaiah,



THE JEWISH TRUST



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1840

A  
JEWISH TRACT,

ON THE  
Fifty-third Chapter of Isaiah.

WRITTEN BY

*h Montalto L*

DR. MONTALTO,  
IN PORTUGUESE.

And TRANSLATED from his Manuscript,

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By PHILO-VERITAS.

*He feedeth on Ashes: A deceived Heart hath turned him aside,  
that he cannot deliver his Soul; nor say, is there not a Lie in  
my Right Hand?*

Isai. xlv. 20.

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M,DCC,XC.

# JEWISH TRACT

Religious and Moral

THE MONTHLY

TRACT



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## P R E F A C E.

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By THE TRANSLATOR.

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HAVING lately met with the following Tract in Manuscript, in the Portuguese language, I thought, I could not better dispose of a few leisure hours, than by translating it.

I flatter myself from the liberality of the present age, (which professes a sincere inquiry after truth, and a promptitude to receive it from whatever quarter it may be offered) that this little Work will meet with that attention, the solidity of its arguments may appear to merit. It is true, that many of the reasonings herein contained, may seem trite, and have, perhaps, been long ago both ad-  
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vanced and canvassed: but if the majority of the conclusions drawn, should prove as truly uncontrovertible, and unanswerable, as I conceive them to be, no apology can be required for urging them again and again. I confess, that in Protestant countries, the most palpable of the errors here aimed at, are nearly exploded; and perhaps had our author wrote in the present times, no traces of that asperity had been seen, with which he occasionally treats the Christian faith. In that age, loaded with all the endless absurdities of the Popish creed: for Dr. MONTALTO, by what I can collect, wrote this Tract at Venice, about the year 1650, and addressed it to a Dominican friar in Spain, who, during his passage through that part of Italy, had challenged him to undertake this controversy in writing. The contest must have been therefore imbittered, by the violence and cruelties then practised by the inquisitions of Spain and Portugal, on his unfortunate countrymen the Jews: and it is not improbable that MONTALTO himself may  
have

have been among the number of those who escaped from those perils. I can only foresee two kinds of objection to a publication of this nature: one of which, will perhaps be started, by those who deny the utility of the theoretical and speculative parts of religion; supposing them no ways conducive to the welfare of mankind; and maintaining that they are destitute of effect on our moral conduct and actions. For my part, I can by no means consent to these positions: I have ever thought, that no system of morality can be long or firmly upheld, but on the basis of a revealed religion: and if that basis should be found rotten, I am afraid the superstructure will be left to unheeded ruin. Thus the various absurdities which still disgrace the religious creed of most nations, though reason spurn at them, are, perhaps, the fatal cause of that avowed neglect of religion, and that dereliction of all moral principle, which are but too plainly visible.

With respect to the influence of theological dogmas on the conduct of man-

kind, I think it might be proved, that the doctrine which teaches a confidence in the sufferings of a Saviour, who died to redeem mankind, (without the imputation of whose merits the righteous are not to be saved, and armed with which, the wicked shall not be punished) has had, and still continues to have, a most lamentable effect, on the moral conduct of mankind. For there exists unhappily in most men, an earnest desire for the rewards of virtue, without the toil of obtaining them; and the mind is but too propense to lean on any factitious aid which is offered, rather than exert itself to work out its own salvation. A different objection is likely to be advanced by those, who are for blindly accepting any doctrine said to be inculcated by revelation, without attempting to fathom mysteries too profound for the weakness of our understandings. However this line of conduct may be thought serviceable to religion, even in its extreme, yet it has in truth tended more than any other to subvert it. If a total reliance on reason alone in mat-

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ters of this nature, be likely to mislead; yet surely the entire neglect, and silencing of our reasoning faculties, can only prove beneficial to the cause of superstition. For before any religious system can be seriously received by the mind to form the rule of its practice, its divine origin should first be proved. What intrinsic proof is more indispensable than the rationality of its doctrines? It cannot be supposed that the Almighty would require from us the belief of particulars, to which the intellectual powers he hath bestowed, not only cannot assent, but must contradict, whenever offered to their cognizance. The mind of man, as a finite substance, must, and naturally will be, frequently called upon to confess its belief of things above its comprehension; but in my opinion, can never be required to own what involves in itself a strict and evident contradiction.

The existence of one supreme God, clothed with the attributes Scripture ascribes to him, is a truth of which the human mind hath frequently discovered  
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the necessity, solely by the energy of its own powers ; though no man could ever yet comprehend the manner or extent of such an existence.

Eternity is, in a similar way, found certain ; yet we can only conceive, that it must necessarily be, without having any conception of a duration without commencement or end.

Again : Amongst propositions which appear contradictory, some are morally, and some absolutely so. Among the former, are many which seem so merely from our defective and inconclusive mode of reasoning. The sufferings of the just at first sight, appear to disprove the justice of God. But, as we cannot with certainty pronounce, whether the most just man who ever lived, may not in some stage or period of his existence, have merited the punishment: as we are equally ignorant of the extent of the rewards the Lord hath in reserve for him; and know not whether this present and seeming evil may not prove a benefit; the solution of this difficulty remains open,  
and

and the mind must wait patiently for fuller evidence. But there are some points, on which that Judge is at all times prepared to decide; having within himself all that is necessary to their determination: and if ever it be in the power of man to assert a thing which shall be contradictory in its own nature, the doctrine of the Trinity surely involves all that impossibility. Here no aid is wanting to discover the different links on which the inconsistency of the position depends; for no sooner do we hear that three is one, and one is three, than the mind immediately denies it, with that firmness, that it should seem were even the whole order of things reversed or annihilated, no change could render it possible, that a part should be found equal to the whole, and three no more than one.

I have been led thus far unwarily, in support of my author, whose arguments and scriptural authorities I hope will weigh with unprejudiced minds. I shall therefore only add, that not possessing  
more

more than the First part of the following discourse, and not knowing indeed whether the others were ever written, I have subjoined a brief Exposition of the said Fifty-third Chapter of Isaiah, as it is unanimously understood by the most eminent of Hebrew writers, in which obvious sense, I trust it will be found most consistent to construe it.



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ON THE  
Fifty-Third Chapter of Isaiah,  
AND OTHER  
TEXTS OF SACRED SCRIPTURE.

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AS the perverters of the Divine Law, depend much on the 53d chapter of Isaiah, for the establishment of their faith, it will be necessary, in order to refute their errors, and establish the truth, that this discourse should exceed the limits of brevity; I shall therefore divide it into three parts. In the first, I propose to prove that the foundation of their exposition is false. In the second, that the purport of the said chapter, will by no means uphold or agree with such interpretation; but on the contrary, overthrows it. In the third, I shall explain the chapter agreeable to the divine truths it contains.

B

WITH

## WITH RESPECT TO THE FIRST.

It is the basis of their arguments, that by the transgression of the first man, he and his descendants were condemned, not only to a corporeal, but also to a spiritual death, which latter, they define to be a privation of the divine grace and glory: so that he could not be restored without an adequate satisfaction and expiation: and that as the crime was infinite, it would require a satisfaction which should be infinite likewise. As no man could accomplish this, it became necessary, according to them, that the second person of that Trinity they had invented, should become incarnate in a human frame, and die for man, to complete the expiation of sin, and obtain the restitution of the human race to the favour and glory of the divinity. All this, say they, was accomplished in that person, who suffered in Jerusalem; and with this view, do they explain, or rather obscure this chapter. The fallacy of these propositions is to be evinced by various reasonings, and testimonies drawn from Scripture. I shall proceed to mention a small part of what might be advanced on the subject.

It is not to be inferred from divine Scripture, that the first man for eating the forbidden fruit

fruit was menaced with, or condemned to a spiritual death in the sense they pretend; that is, banished from the divine glory. The only attempt to prove which, arises from the repetition of the word, in that verse wherein God says \*, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, death thou shalt die:" (rendered in English, thou shalt surely die) which cannot be meant to denounce spiritual death, since in the 26th chapter of Genesis, the same repetition is used, when Abimelech made known to all his people that, Whoever should molest that man Isaac, or Rebecca his wife, should surely be put to death. And again in the First Book of Kings, chap. ii. where Solomon imposes the penalty of death on Shimei, in case he should ever pass the brook of Kidron. Now it is clear, that these kings could adjudge to a corporeal death only, and not to a spiritual one, which is in the power of God alone. Likewise in the Second Book of Samuel, chap. xii. the prophet Nathan says to David, "The son born unto thee, shall surely die;" and the death of the child followed on the seventh day, where it is evident, his spiritual death is not meant. Not

\* Gen. ii. 16.

that I would aver this repetition to be without meaning, since it may signify various things.

*First.* Such a duplication in this phrase, is meant assuredly to certify the penalty; as if it were said, you shall infallibly die, conformable to the usual stile of the divine writings, in which this kind of idiom is continually used to express the fixed establishment of the event treated on; as where it is said in the 7th chapter of Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt surely remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh:" and many parallel passages familiar to all, who study Scripture in the original.

*Secondly.* It may serve to shew (as our sages teach) that not only Adam and Eve should remain subject to death, for their crime, but also their descendants.

*Thirdly.* That man should not only become subject to a natural decease, by the consumption of his radical moisture; but likewise to accidental death, from various violent causes; (which frequently cut the thread of life, before the period promised by the natural constitution of man) and that after thus experiencing mortality in his life, through his various struggles, he should finally die.

*Fourthly.*



*Fourthly.* That the blessed God would suspend that particular providence with which he assisted man, whilst yet free from sin; which divine assistance and concurrence is life, and the privation of which is that kind of spiritual death, from which that of the body necessarily follows; for although, man by his original nature, was mortal, being composed of contrary elements, (his life depending on the conservation of his natural heat, the continuation of which, sooner or later, must necessarily exhaust and consume the radical humidity which forms its own proper aliment) yet, he either was or might be immortal by the divine grace: since being in the presence of the blessed God, and under his perpetual protection, he would be preserved from accidental death, and privileged to eat of the tree of life, he would be safe from a natural decease, by the virtue of its fruit to repair and preserve the radical humour in its perfection. The temperature even of the terrestrial Paradise, may be supposed to assist greatly the preservation of life. In full confirmation of these conclusions, we find, that when Adam and Eve, after their transgression, were cited before the divine tribunal, the sentence pronounced,

sets

sets forth only corporeal pains, to end in corporeal death.

## SECOND.

Were it even granted, that Adam and Eve were condemned to a spiritual death, in the sense alledged of a total and perpetual privation of the divine grace, it would be still unreasonable, and extremely repugnant to divine justice, to believe, that all their descendants, namely, all the human species, should be condemned to the same, not having actually sinned. I do not deny that the progeny of Adam were subjected in what regards the body to the penalties of his crime, since from him they derived their bodily existence; but surely not the souls of all human kind, which received not their being from Adam, but from the blessed Creator, immediately after creation. What could be imagined more distant from the rectitude of divine justice? Let those, whose understandings are too blind, to see the force and evidence of this intellectual proof, hear God himself, who by the prophet Ezekiel proclaims\*, "All souls are mine, as well the soul of the father, as that of the son, is

\* Ezek. xviii. 4.

mine :

mine: the soul that sinneth he shall die."

This does not mean merely that the souls are under the divine power, that is common to souls, and all other creatures: for every thing is under his empire; but it signifies, that the Father is not called Father, for having given a soul to his Son; nor the Child, Son, for having received the soul from his Father, but are merely so related in their corporeal part; for the soul of the Father, and that of the Son, received their existence immediately from God himself, as he says by the prophet Isaiah \*. "Souls have I made."

He created, he infused them in organized bodies; and therefore it is not reasonable, that the soul of the child should be condemned for the guilt of its parent, nor the parent for that of its child. But the soul that sinneth, he shall be condemned to that spiritual death, which consists in the privation of divine favour and glory; for it adds further, "The man who was just and executed righteousness and justice, shall surely live, saith the Lord; and if a child shall be begotten who seeth the iniquities of his father, and doth not as him, but executes my statutes and walks in my ways, he shall not die for

\* Isai..lvii. 16.

the sins of his father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son, but the justice of the just shall be done unto him, and the evil of the wicked on him shall it rest."

What clearer proofs do ye seek to overthrow your fallacious propositions? Ye who maintain the condemnation of all the human race, for the original sin of the first man; since God himself hath deigned to manifest the paths of his justice, saying, The just son of the wicked shall not perish for the sin of his parent, but surely live to enjoy the divine grace; that is, no soul shall be punished with spiritual death, but for the sins itself hath committed.

### T H I R D.

Adam, it is true, remained bereft of the divine favour, but did not the decree of justice reserve any remedy for his restitution from the infinity of his disgrace? May we not say, that penitence is that remedy to reconcile man with God, and to repair his loss of the divine favour? Will you grant that the sin of Adam called down his condemnation from divine justice, and yet deny that the grief of having offended the blessed God; continual petitions for pardon, sollicitude



citude to depart from disobedience, and constant perseverance in obedience; the chastisements he might inflict on himself; and the patient reception of those inflicted by the divinity for expiation: will you, I say, deny that all these could have any efficacy before the divine mercy, to restore him to his pristine estate, and the enjoyment of the divine benevolence? Is there then justice in God to condemn, and will you not allow in him mercy to pardon? What does the Scripture more continually proclaim, than that the works of his mercy, are more numerous, and greater, than those of his justice? Is not God thus announced in the decalogue, "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of such as hate me, and shewing mercy unto thousands, of them that love me, and keep my commandments." And how could the world be preserved, if it were otherwise? Moreover, God himself teaches us this doctrine evidently by the prophet Ezekiel, in the chapter above cited, saying, "When the wicked man shall turn from all his sins which he hath done, and shall keep all my statutes, he shall surely live and not die; all his iniquities which he hath done, shall not

“ be accounted or remembered unto him, in  
 “ the righteousness which he doth he shall  
 “ live. Surely I do not delight in the  
 “ death of the wicked, saith the Lord, but  
 “ returning from his ways, he shall live.”

In this chapter the prophet speaks principally of spiritual life and death, which your own authors grant, as may be seen in Nich. De Lira, in his exposition of this same chapter. According to this, what stronger proof can you require, to convince you that penitence reconcileth man with God; and that by such means, the beatitude of eternal life may be acquired: (as our sages say) Great is penitence, which brings man near to the throne of glory, as is evident from the prophet Jeremiah, in chap. iv. If Israel will turn, unto me shall they return, saith the Lord. And Hosea, chap. xiv. “ Turn, O Israel, “ unto the Lord thy God;” which says, as it were, that by means of penitence, thou mayest return to unite thyself with the divinity. And Malachi, in chap. iii. “ Turn “ ye unto me, and I will turn unto you, saith “ the Lord of Hosts.” So that in true repentance exists a remedy to reconcile man with God, and repair his spiritual disgrace; and

and thus the first man had no need of the vain recourse which hath been feigned.

#### FOURTH,

You alledge that the sin of Adam was infinite. An assertion this, most untrue; and equally repugnant to real philosophy and theology, which teach that, no finite substance or power, can produce an action or effect, which should be infinite; since then Adam was a finite substance, and his power limited, how could he produce an action or effect, which was infinite? To say that the sin of Adam was infinite, by reason of the infinity of the object against which it was committed, namely, against God himself, would be but a vain refuge, since an action cannot derive infinity from its object, but when that object is immediately and intrinsically comprehended in that action; as, the intelligence would be infinite, which could comprehend an infinite subject. But the sin of Adam in eating the forbidden fruit, consisted in the disobedience, demonstrated by that act. Now, want of obedience, is rather a privation or negation, than an action, and with such, real infinity no ways consists.

## FIFTH.

If you still insist that the sin of Adam was infinite in the above sense, as being committed against an infinite God, you must likewise confess, however unwillingly, that whatever action a man does for love of God, must be infinite; and much rather so than sin, since in the transgression, although it supposes disobedience, there may be no particular intention to disobey; but in virtuous acts, there is an intention, and an application of mind to obey God, and satisfy his will, which must be particularly granted in the performance of those works instituted and commanded by God himself: as the circumcision, sacrifices, and those other precepts of the divine law; the execution of which, is ordained to be performed towards God. These must with redoubled reason be accounted infinite, according to your arguments; and thus should we possess in them an infinite satisfaction, to reconcile man with the Deity.

That you may perceive the efficacy of these works instituted and commanded by the most merciful Lord, observe what he himself says unto Abraham our father, in chapter xvii. of Genesis, respecting the covenant of circumcision,



cision. " I will establish my covenant between me, and between thee, and between thy seed after thee, for an eternal covenant, to be unto thee for God, and to thy seed after thee." It does not mean that he would be the God of Abraham and his seed, in respect to dominion only; for in this sense, is he equally God of all the human species, of every country and profession; but it implies, that he would be the God of Abraham, and his chosen descendants, by the particular union of his divine grace with them. Then if you say, that involved in the sin of Adam, man remained deprived of the divine grace and glory, we may fairly conclude, that by means of this holy sacrifice, the penalty was remitted, man was reconciled to the blessed God, and restored to his grace; otherwise there could have existed no such union, through the sacrifices of the divine law, which we find to have obtained the remission of sins, at least of such as were committed ignorantly, and through error. Nay, in that great and holy day, the 10th of the seventh month, by means of penitence and humiliation, sins even were expiated that had been committed intentionally. For thus is it written in the 16th chapter of Leviticus, " And it shall be unto you for a  
 " perpetual

“ perpetual statute. In the seventh month,  
 “ in the tenth day of the month, shall you  
 “ afflict your souls; for in that day shall ye  
 “ make atonement for yourselves, to purify  
 “ yourselves from all your sins; before the  
 “ Lord shall ye be cleansed.” Ergo, if the  
 sacrifices, and the day of expiation did atone  
 for actual sin, of which a man was guilty,  
 how much more might they expiate the ori-  
 ginal sin, of which he was not actually culpable.

Since your imprudence has been such,  
 as to assert, that the sacrifices of the Mosaic  
 law did not confer grace, whilst those you  
 have invented do; hearken, and I will prove,  
 how evidently you contradict Scripture, which  
 so often repeats, that by means of those sacri-  
 fices, not only sins were pardoned, but that  
 the favour of them was grateful to the blessed  
 God. What should this metaphor signify,  
 but that in virtue of them, man acquired, or  
 recovered the divine favour; and let not this  
 be received on our word, or on yours, but by  
 the effects: let us judge of what passes in the  
 divine consistory; the only safe means to judge  
 of divine secrets.

By means of the sacrifices of the divine  
 law, did the glory of the divinity descend for  
 a particular aid, to dwell in the tabernacle,  
 made

made by Moses; and the same event took place in the house of the sanctuary, built by Solomon. Thus do we read in the 25th chapter of Exodus, " And they shall make  
 " unto me a sanctuary, and I will dwell  
 " amongst them." And in the same chapter,  
 " And ye shall place the mercy seat above  
 " the ark, and in the ark shall ye put the  
 " testimony, which I shall give thee; there I  
 " will meet thee, and I will speak to thee  
 " from above the mercy seat, from between  
 " the two cherubims, which are above the ark  
 " of the testimony, of all that I shall com-  
 " mand you, concerning the children of Is-  
 " rael." And in chap. xxix. which follows,  
 " Now this is that which thou shalt offer  
 " upon the altar, two lambs of the first year,  
 " day by day continually, as the meat-offer-  
 " ing of the morning, and according to the  
 " drink-offering thereof, for a sweet savour,  
 " an offering made by fire unto the Lord:  
 " a continual burnt-offering throughout your  
 " generations, at the door of the tabernacle of  
 " the congregation, before the Lord, where I  
 " will meet you to speak there unto you. And  
 " there I will meet the children of Israel, and  
 " the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glo-  
 " ry." And again, in the last chapter of Exo-  
 dus,

dus, " And Moses finished the work, then a  
 " cloud covered the tent of the congregation,  
 " and the glory of the Lord filled the taber-  
 " nacle." In the 1st Book of Kings, chap.  
 viii. it is said, " And King Solomon, and all  
 " the congregation of Israel, that were assem-  
 " bled together with him, stood with him be-  
 " fore the ark, sacrificing sheep and bulls; and  
 " behold, when the priests came out of the  
 " sanctuary, that the cloud filled the house  
 " of the Lord; and the priests could not  
 " stand to minister before the cloud, for the  
 " glory of the Lord filled the Lord's house.  
 " Then spake Solomon, The Lord said,  
 " that he would dwell in the thick darkness.  
 " I have surely built thee an house to dwell  
 " in: a settled place for thee to abide in for  
 " ever." In perfect conformity to which,  
 are various places of Scripture, which tes-  
 tify that the divine Majesty resided, and  
 particularly assisted in the Holy of Holies;  
 and from thence communicated its divine in-  
 fluence, and revealed unto the high priest, at  
 his intreaty, hidden decrees, and secrets. It  
 should seem, methinks, that that present  
 should be allowed to acquire grace for the  
 vassals of a king, at the offering of which,  
 the king deigns to visit, and hold converse  
 with



with them. Do we see, signs thus advantageous, or any way equal with these, from which we may collect, that the sacrifices of your law confer grace, as you pretend? Shew us then that residence of the divine Majesty in Rome, since you say that the holy city of Jerusalem was rejected, of which the blessed God hath said, (Psalm cxxxii.) "This" is my resting place for ever: here will "I dwell, for I have desired it." And in its stead Rome was chosen. You say, that by means of the mass he that suffered on the cross descends, so that the bread or wafer, is converted into his body, in virtue of the words your priests pronounce: but surely a wafer do we behold, before the words, a wafer whilst the words are pronouncing, and a wafer afterwards. If it is not upheld it falls: if it is eaten, it descends into the bowels and intestines: if the usual reverence is lost, and it is trodden under foot, it suffers itself to be trampled on, and does not avenge the insult: as was seen in Portugal, when before the king and princes, an Englishman entered, and snatching it from the hands of the priest after the consecration, trod upon it, as did another in Rome, on a day of solemn procession, in sight of the Pope and

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cardinals.

cardinals; the like having frequently happened in public, and in private. Occasions these surely, which called for vengeance on his insulted honour, and for a demonstration that your sacrifices were acceptable to him; but alas! we hear of no such punishment to prevent a repetition of like offences. The ark of the testimony, although it was not a deity, (as you call your wafer) but being dedicated to the custody of the tables of the law, and the divinity having revealed himself over the place where it stood, God never permitted its sanctity to be prophaned with impunity; for, when through the sins of the people it was taken away by the Philistines, carried to Ashdod, and placed in the temple of their idolatry, near to the idol Dagon, the idol was on the next day, found fallen to the ground before the ark; and having returned it to its place, the ensuing day it was found overthrown with the head and hands cut off, at the door. Neither did he execute justice on those false gods alone, but likewise on the inhabitants of Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron, principal cities of the Philistines, and their boundaries; striking them with plagues, as the Sacred Writings recite: so that they were forced to restore it, sending it in a miraculous manner

manner drawn by oxen unto Beth-shemesh, a city of Israel, whose inhabitants not observing a due decorum, in sight of the Ark, the Almighty slew many of them. And as it was carried from thence to Annos, towards the city of David, because, Uzzah, son of Aminadab, who led the cart, extended his hand to hold it up from falling, the Divine Justice slew him, for attempting to touch the ark, not being a Levite; neither could the rectitude of his intention, rescue him. Open then your eyes, and compare the difference, since when the Most High had decreed in his just judgments, that his people should be carried into captivity, and that Jerusalem with the temple should be destroyed by the Chaldeans, and afterwards by the Romans; yet, did he not permit the sanctity of the ark to be prophaned, nor suffer the enemies of his holy name to triumph over it; for the prophet Jeremiah, was directed by a divine revelation to conceal it, whence it will not be brought forth, till the Lord assembles the dispersion of his people, to whom alone appertains this precious treasure. Exclusive of what our sages have said on this subject, we find the same recorded in the second chapter of the Second Book of the Maccabees.

Hence behold the respect which the Most High requires towards holy things, confess how those are profaned to which you attribute sanctity, and from thence collect which sacrifices are acceptable to the blessed God, and which are not.

Malachi foretelling the advent of the Messiah, says \*, " Then shall the offerings of " Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the " Lord, as in the days that are passed, and " in ancient years;" signalizing the times of Moses and Solomon, because the favour of the sacrifices presented to God at the dedication of the tabernacle, and of the temple, were accepted, in evident demonstration of which, the fire descended from heaven, in sight of all the people, to consume them. It should follow therefore that the sacrifices offered after the coming of the Messiah should be at least equal, if not superior to those of ancient times, which were offered in our first ages. Surely it must be then granted that since those conferred grace, these should have the same efficacy ; but interpret these latter sacrifices here mentioned by the prophet, in what sense you please, you will still find

\* Malach, iii. 4.

your-



yourselves in a strait, whence you cannot easily be extricated; for each interpretation must be equally repugnant to your assertions.

## S I X T H.

We may likewise easily discover the error of those who say, that prior to the advent of the Messiah, no one could enter into glory, by various testimonies to the contrary contained in the Holy Writ. In the fifth chapter of Genesis, it is written, " And Enoch " walked with God," and he did not appear, for God had taken him. Neither need we enter here into the speculation, whether Enoch died, or is still living in body and soul. It suffices for my argument, that Scripture witnesseth of him, that he walked with God, that is, in the service of God: for the same expression is found in respect to Noah, saying, " Noah was a just man, perfect was he in " his generations: and Noah walked with " God." And thus of Abraham, the prince of human perfection, of whom God says, " He " walked perfectly in my presence." Having said, as we have seen of Enoch, that he walked with God, it immediately adds, that God took him: this does not import barely his

his death, to express which, it was most natural, that the same language would be used as in that of all his predecessors, and of all the descendants of Adam till Noah, of each of whom it is said, and he died. Hence it is clear that God took him, to communicate to him immediately his glory, in company of the angels and holy spirits: for this phrase cannot denote death in general, but particularly that of the just, whose souls God takes to himself that they may enjoy the splendor of his divinity.

It is likewise said in Ezekiel \*, " Behold, " I take from thee the desire of thine eyes;" meaning his wife, who, by her sanctity was a worthy consort of such a prophet. Parallel to this is what the Psalmist says †, " But " God will redeem my soul from the power " of the grave, for he shall take me for ever." In another place he says ‡, " Thou shalt " guide with thy counsel, and afterwards " receive me into glory."

Hearken to what divine Scripture clearly manifests, touching the prophet Elijah, saying, in the second chapter of the Second

\* Chap. xxiv. 16.

† Psalm xlix. 16.

‡ Ibid. lxxiii. 24.

Book of Kings, " And it came to pass,  
 " when the Lord would take up Elijah into  
 " heaven amidst a tempest, that the sons of  
 " the prophets of Bethel came to Elisha, and  
 " said unto him: Knowest thou, that the  
 " Lord will take away thy master from over  
 " thy head to-day. And the same said the  
 " sons of the prophets of Jericho unto him."  
 And it concludes, saying, " It came to pass,  
 " as they still went on talking, behold, a  
 " chariot of fire, and horses of fire, parted  
 " them both; and Elijah went up in the  
 " whirlwind to heaven." Elisha seeing it,  
 exclaimed, " My Father! My Father! the  
 " chariot of Israel, and the horsemen there-  
 of," &c. What was then this ascension of  
 Elijah, except an evident and public demon-  
 stration, on the theatre of this world, that  
 the blessed God has another world more sub-  
 lime, and another life more glorious, in re-  
 serve for the just; for it says, that God took  
 him; and likewise, that the place whither he  
 was taken, was to heaven. It is most certain  
 then, that he ascended to enjoy divine glory:  
 and agreeable to this we must pronounce it  
 false, to say, that in order to admit the just  
 to this enjoyment, a Mediator was necessary,  
 who should die for them. Does it appear  
 agree-

agreeable to the understanding, that those holy patriarchs and prophets, whom God made, as it were, the secretaries of his divine consistory, whom he filled with god-like spirit, and elevated their understanding, so that, whilst yet in the commerce of the flesh, they understood high and profound mysteries: by means of whom, was revealed to the world, the substance of future events: of whom it is said, that the Lord hath not done any thing without communicating his secret to his servants the prophets; that those who worked many supernatural wonders; to whom he gave power to restore the soul to dead bodies; under whose empire, the universe at intervals, seemed submitted; whom the sun and moon obeyed, suspending at their command, their course, or turning backward; who conquered even angelic beings, as we read of our father Jacob; since the angel already vanquished by him in struggling, intreated him, saying\*, " Send me away, for the dawn ascendeth:" which shews, that without his leave he could not depart: and the holy patriarch answered him accordingly. " I will not let thee go, until

\* Gen. xxxii. 26.

" thou



“ thou blefs me,” &c. Does it, I fay, appear likely, or reasonable, that souls thus united with God, whilst yet clogged with matter, fhould need an interceffor after their feparation from it, to admit them to the enjoyment of the divine prefence? Look at the prince of prophets, Mofes, and behold him glorified in life! See him converse with the ineffable and incomprehenfible Majefty, as it were, face to face, as the divine Scripture testifies, in the thirty-third chapter of Exodus. So highly privileged, that he had entrance at all times before the Supreme King, for the folution of any doubt as may be collected where he himfelf fays, in the ninth chapter of Numbers, “ Stand you here, and hear what the Lord fhall command you.” Enabled to fuf-tain an angelic life, thrice abftaining from food and drink, for the fpace of forty days; all the time he remained with the Lord on Mount Sinai, whose face fhone fo that no one could bear the fight of it when unveiled; who arrived to fuch a gradation in this life, that God fhewed him his treasures, as it is faid. “ I will make all my goodnefs pafs before thee;” and he faw the back of the divine appearance, that is, fpeaking as the Scripture frequently does, giving a bodily image to fpiritual things, accommo-

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dated to the limited nature of our understandings; by which is to be understood, that Moses discovered the divine secrets and attributes, beholding the dependencies of the angelical, celestial, and terrestrial worlds on the Creator, as well with respect to creation as government. Thus did he comprehend the highest secrets of his Providence, but did not as yet arrive at the degree of beholding in front the divine essence, which no man can support in the garment of the flesh, as God says himself, "No man shall see me and live." In all which is clearly shewn, that this degree of glory, was then denied him, but because he was in the bands of the flesh, not that he depended on a Mediator. For it is impossible to preserve the union of body and soul, when the soul arrives to behold the light of the divinity; and it was necessary that Moses should live till he had delivered the law in perfection. But having finished that task for which he was elected, although the natural period of his death was not yet arrived, (for at the age of one hundred and twenty years his eye was not become dim, nor his colour faded) God made him pass from a mortal to an immortal and glorious life; satisfying his request of beholding him before he departed from the body, granting

granting him that, which our sages call metaphorically death by a salute from the mouth of God, (conformable to the petition of the enraptured spouse in the most excellent but mysterious of spiritual songs; saying, "Kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth.") Thus do we interpret the meaning of divine Scripture; which says in Deuteronomy, "And Moses died there by the mouth of the Lord:" the same being said of his brother Aaron; which delightful species of death, is no other than the manifestation of the presence of the blessed God to the intellectual eyes of those his elect, whose souls being elevated by the delectable and ravishing contemplation of the Supreme Good, forsake the body, and fly on the wings of love to unite with God. In this manner was it that our master Moses departed from this world in the enjoyment of divine glory. Of this, his glorious obsequies afford an evident proof; for divine Scripture testifies that God himself gave him burial. Do you imagine that the divine Majesty would concede so much honour to the carcase of a man, whose soul was not immediately to enter into glory? It appears ridiculous to suppose, that the soul of a person, thus estimated by God, and by whose intercession was pardoned the

sins not only of individuals, but of a whole people, should be plunged into hell, or purgatory, to await the coming of a Mediator, to expiate the sin of Adam, in the commission of which he had no share.

Observe the favour the blessed God conferred when the law was given, not alone on Moses, but likewise on other distinguished persons, for holy writ says in the xxivth chapter of Exodus, " And Moses he ascended and  
 " Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy  
 " elders of Israel, and beheld the God of Israel, and under his feet they saw as it were  
 " a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it  
 " were the substance of heaven in its clearness: But unto the nobles of Israel he extended not his hand: they saw God and eat  
 " and drank." In this vision, there were various degrees, which we gather from its not being said, Moses and Aaron (they) went up, but Moses, in the singular (he) went up and Aaron, to denote that none arrived at the same degree of exaltation with Moses; and thus with regard to the others in the order they are named, was the sublimity of the vision proportioned to the disposition of each; and though none arrived at the perfection of Moses, who is said to have communed with  
 God



God face to face, it argues sufficiently for the purpose, that in this world they arrived to the grace of seeing the blessed God, in a kind of inexplicable vision; for if their souls attained that height when imprisoned in the obscurity of the body, it would be ridiculous to imagine, that when these blessed souls should be freed from their low and terrestrial incumbrances, they should be degraded to hell, or purgatory, in expectance of a Mediator to expiate original sin. Finally, so great is the pre-eminence of the law of God given on Mount Sinai, that in the observance of it, the true road to happiness is found, without depending on any thing else; as is declared amidst various other passages in the xviiiith chapter of Leviticus, saying, " And you shall keep my ceremonies and my judgments, which if a man doth, he shall live in them." Behold here how the attainment of the Supreme Good consists in the observance of the statutes and judgments of the divine law; and that such observance is sufficient to confer everlasting life, which is meant by this passage: for of the corporeal life the above promise cannot universally be verified; since we see that the true observers of the divine law were not, nor are less subject to death than other persons,

sons, neither do they always or in general enjoy the advantage of a longer life, as we see in the example of that holy man *Isaiah*, the sublimity of whose prophecy shews clearly the union of his angelic spirit with the divinity. Nevertheless he died in prison under the tyranny of the impious king *Manasseh*, for having preached with intrepid soul the divine word. We have likewise the instance of that just king *Josiah*, of whom sacred Scripture says, "He did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and that he walked in all the ways of David his father, not deviating to the right, nor to the left;" and in the second book of *Kings*, chap. xxiii. after repeating his holy actions says, "That one like unto him had not been before him, for he turned unto the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul, and with all his force, in full conformity to the law of *Moses*." Yet he died a violent death, by the hands of the archers of *Pharaoh Necho*, king of *Egypt*, before he attained the age of forty.

Behold likewise those valiant youths who with their mother, laid down their lives, under the tyrannical empire of *Antiochus*; refusing to violate the divine law: with many others in various ages; sanctifying the holy name,

name and law with the sacrifice of their lives.

These and many other events would controvert the said promises, were they to be understood of a temporal life. Now, since divine truth is infallible, we must necessarily interpret them of eternal life, as the authors of the Chaldee paraphrase have declared. See Onkelos on this place, and also Jonathan Ben Uziel on the xxth chapter of Ezekiel, where the divine promise is defined. Onkelos being grandson of a brother of Titus, and become greatly learned after his conversion from Paganism to Judaism: and Jonathan lived in the time of the second temple. This is what they say; in this manner must we understand what Moses says in the thirtieth chapter of Deuteronomy; "Behold, I have set before thee this " day life and good, death and evil," as it is explained by the Psalmist, Psalm xix. "The " law of God is perfect, causing the soul to " return;" and whether should it return? Surely to God, from whom it emanated. Agreeable to the declaration of Solomon, in the last chapter of Ecclesiastes. "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," &c. for the dust shall return to the earth of which it was formed, and the spirit shall return

to

to God who gave it. Behold then, from what has been urged, that by means of the observance of the divine law, the soul returns immediately to unite itself with God, and thus will the vain fictions and inventions, which suppose the death of a man necessary to our salvation, be easily overthrown.

#### SEVENTH.

But how vain and repugnant to divine truth, is that fiction you have invented of a composition of persons in the Godhead, comprehended in one essence: to the refutation of this monstrous chimera, I have elsewhere dedicated a long treatise; but as brevity will permit, I will here produce some heads, which I hope will be found to contain an antidote against the poison of this doctrine. In the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses says, "The Lord our God; the Lord is one." Observe, that in this passage, when we read Adonai, or Lord, both in the first and third part of the sentence, the ineffable name is written—the proper and incommunicable name of the divine Majesty; to avoid the pronunciation of which, we read Adonai, an appellation divine, inasmuch as it is significant of the dominion of God over the universe. The  
true



true import of the name written, and not pronounced is, He that was, is, and will be, with an existence necessarily independent of a cause, and the cause of the existence of all things; besides infinite other mysteries deducible therefrom.

Now there are two names here written of the divine Majesty, the ineffable name expressing the agent or person: and the title God applied to, and spoken of him, expressive of his divine nature. He whose divine nature is here mentioned, can only be the individual; but you do not distinguish between the individual and his nature, when you say that the ineffable name signifies his divine nature, whereas it is clear that the name first written must denote the individuum, or person, of whom it is said that he is one: for every thing being present to him, and being willing to preserve Israel in all future generations from this pernicious error, it does not merely say, the Lord our God is one; neither is it said the Lord our God is one God, (as the Vulgate falsely translates it) but repeats again the Lord is one, which is, as if it were said, that particular individuum, or person, in whom the divinity resides, is one sole person; which is confirmed by the meaning of that same holy name, which

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is,

is, as we have said, one eternal being, necessarily independent of a cause, whose existence is his essence: and thus it cannot be adapted to the Son, or the Holy Ghost, by you invented; for if the Son is begotten (or proceeds) from the Father, the Father is the cause, and the Son the effect of that cause. And thus that most high name cannot be applied to him, since it denotes a total independence of cause, nor unto the Holy Ghost, since you say that proceeded from both; and its existence must be dependent on this, as an effect on its cause. This doctrine of the unity of the Lord is many times repeated in the divine law; and here, as well as in other places, after this doctrine is taught, it adds, "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart," &c. recommending that they may never be forgot. Afford me then some reason, ye Satrapes of Pseudo-Theology, who contradict this. If this monstrous mystery is so important, why the Lord did not reveal it to the people of Israel, of whom he says, "Israel is my son; he is my first-born:" to whom he said, "You are the children of the Lord your God, who hath chosen you for a treasure among all nations." And moreover, the law which I have given them is perfect  
and

and faithful, giving wisdom to the base, and which enlighteneth the (intellectual) eye.

Did he then reveal unto the nations what he denied to Israel? You have against you what the Royal Psalmist says, "He sheweth the words of the divine law unto Jacob, (which is to be understood of the speculative part) his statutes and judgments unto Israel, (which form the active portion). He doeth not so to any other nation; his judgments they have not known," neither in theory nor practice.

You will perhaps say, that Israel being a people rude and imperfect, they were incapable of this doctrine; but the divine Moses contradicts this, when he says in the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, "And you shall keep them and do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding, in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and shall say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people: for what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is to us, in all that we invoke him for? and what nation so great, that hath statutes and judgments just, as all this law, which I set before you this day?" Does

this title of a barbarous and ignorant people wherewith you reproach them, appear to agree with that given them by the divine spirit of a wise, great, and prudent nation, rendered thus by the possession of the law bestowed by him? Shall we pronounce unfit to receive, or unworthy of this mystery, those patriarchs from whom is derived a discriminative appellation applied to God? Those illustrious men who were judged fit subjects for the inspiration of the prophetic spirit! Those priests, gifted with all the purity and perfection, required for the divine worship! Those sage disciples of the prophets: and finally, that numerous body, great and small, of those who were instructed in his doctrine. Were then your carpenters, watermen, fishermen, publicans, and all the basest plebeians, the scum of the people, more capable, or gifted with understandings more refined than all these? Not indeed that this degree of previous instruction was so truly indispensable, otherwise it would follow, that the law of God was not perfect, since it could not make the low and simple wise. If the law does not enlighten the understanding, it is not full of perfection, neither is such the law of God. Since the Psalmist says, The law of God is perfect, and possessed of the above  
pro-



properties. Nay more, your Master himself destroys this alledged refusal of the divine mysteries to our fathers, from the grossness of their conceptions; for he is related by the publican, Matthew, to have said, " I confess to thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto the little," &c.

Might I not remark, that the reproach you thereby cast on Israel, is more truly your due, for accepting a doctrine thus absurd, and thus replete with impossibilities. For the reception of tenets so contrary to reason and truth, a great degree of imbecility and imprudence was necessary: but according to the wise King, the simple believeth every thing. Moreover, the same God in that sublime Canticle, wherein is compendiously pourtrayed the state of the people of Israel, through the course of ages to come, foretelling this long captivity and persecution under the empire of Edom, with its consummation, says, " Behold that I, I alone, and no other God with me," &c. What clearer refutation of your fiction can be looked for, than that which this doctrine contains? For here the distinction of persons is evidently disproved, and the Deity proved to be

be one; neither is it possible for you to surmount or explain away the expression of I alone, without any companion.

The prophet Isaiah, chap. xlv. speaking unto the children of Israel of the present captivity, and promising our redemption from it, says, " Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I, the  
 " first and the last, and besides me there is no  
 " God. And who as I, shall call and shall  
 " declare it, and set it in order for me, since I  
 " appointed the antient people. The things  
 " that are coming, and shall come, let them  
 " then shew unto you." As it were to declare, Suffer not yourselves to be perverted, O my people, by that vain sect who maintain the existence of a second and third person, to whom they communicate my Godhead, for I am alone the first and the last; and that man whom they pronounce equal to me, let him demonstrate that equality by foretelling the course of future events, as I have done by my prophets. You must acknowledge, that in the Gospel, not only this proof is wanting, of prophesying events to come, to prove the participation of its author in the divinity: but the Son even confesses his ignorance in the thirteenth chapter of Mark, where, speaking of the day of judgment, he says, " That  
 " the

“ the day or hour no one knows, neither the  
 “ angels of heaven, nor even the Son, but  
 “ solely the Father.” What more conclusive  
 argument for your confusion? What greater  
 proof that, that man was only a lump of earth?  
 Neither will it avail you to say, That as a  
 man he knew it not, but as God he knew it;  
 for according to your own hypothesis, he was  
 not his Son as a man, but in respect of his di-  
 vine nature. Now, although the Father and  
 the Son alone are here mentioned as the divine  
 persons, yet it is to be supposed that the Ho-  
 ly Ghost knew it not; but in truth, the Evan-  
 gelist in question did not think of introducing  
 that third personage, who a long time after-  
 wards sprung up amongst you, amidst various  
 other novelties.

The prophet Isaiah proceeds to relate your  
 idolatries succinctly; after all which he says,  
 “ Remember these, O Israel, and Jacob, for  
 “ thou art my servant. Thus saith the Lord,  
 “ thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee  
 “ from the womb, I am the Lord that mak-  
 “ eth all things; that stretcheth out the hea-  
 “ vens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth  
 “ by myself.” Behold here, how clearly God  
 says, that he is God alone, and no one with  
 him, whilst your fallacious discourses suggest,  
 that

that he is accompanied, and that the word existed with God; but He to whom this perversion was present says, verse 25. "That he will turn the wise backward." In the fourteenth chapter of Zechariah we read, "In that day shall the Lord be one, and his name one." Surely he hath always been, and shall be one. But this denotes, that his unity shall at that time be confessed by all, which till then had not been the case. He shall then be adored under one name, forsaking all irrational ideas of that contradiction of a Trinity in unity. Neither does the divine discovery of this deceitful participation of the divine essence rest here; but to preserve the people of Israel from such pernicious sophisms, and uphold them in the true doctrine of his unity; he hath sought other occasions to confirm our souls and understandings, and take away any temptation of stumbling; by enjoining us to give no ear to any novel doctrine, and declaring false whatever is clearly incompatible with that taught in Sinai, as in the eleventh chapter of Deuteronomy, "Behold I set before you this day, the blessing and the curse: the blessing, if ye hearken to the commandments of the Lord your God, &c. And the curse, if ye do not hearken to the commandments of the

" Lord



“ Lord your God ; but turn from the way I  
 “ have commanded you this day, to go after  
 “ other Gods that ye have not known.” Be-  
 hold to what a dreadful precipice the adop-  
 tion of these strange fancies would precipi-  
 tate Israel ! The mention made by Moses  
 of gods that ye have not heard of, nor known,  
 shews, that he foresaw the imaginations which  
 would be spread, and uttered a curse against  
 such who should follow the steps of those who  
 attribute divinity unto that man : and that spi-  
 rit, of whom he had made no mention to  
 them, nor taught them.

We find also written, in the thirteenth chap-  
 ter, as follows : “ When a prophet shall arise  
 “ among you, or a dreamer of dreams, and  
 “ shall give you a sign or a miracle, which  
 “ token and miracle shall happen, saying at  
 “ the same time to you, Let us go after other  
 “ gods whom we have not known, and serve  
 “ them : hearken not unto the words of that  
 “ prophet, for I the Lord your God do  
 “ prove you, &c. After the Lord your God  
 “ shall you walk ; and that prophet or drea-  
 “ mer of dreams shall ye put to death, for he  
 “ hath spoken falsely against the Lord your  
 “ God, who hath brought thee out of the land  
 “ of Egypt ; to draw you out of the way, in

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“ which

" which the Lord thy God hath commanded  
 " thee to walk, &c. Or if your brother  
 " should entice you, saying, Let us go and  
 " serve other gods whom neither you nor your  
 " fathers have known," &c. Do not these  
 words evidently condemn your opinions, in-  
 dicating distinctly a seducer to arise in the  
 holy land, in the midst of Jerusalem, who  
 should secretly or publicly promulgate a plu-  
 rality of persons in the divinity, which doc-  
 trine neither the Jews of that time, nor their  
 predecessors had ever known or heard of be-  
 fore? Thus, in conformity to the divine com-  
 mand was he most justly condemned to death.

The twenty-eighth chapter of Deuterono-  
 my, prophetically setting forth the succession  
 of future ills, in chastisement of the violation  
 of the divine law, first describes the destruc-  
 tion of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans and the  
 Romans, saying, " And God will raise up  
 " against you a people from the farthestmost  
 " parts of the earth, with the voice of eagles,  
 " a people whose language you shall not un-  
 " derstand." And afterwards it says, " And  
 " God shall scatter you amidst all the nations  
 " from one end of the earth to the other, and  
 " you shall serve other gods, whom neither  
 " you nor your fathers have known, wood  
 " and

“ and stone; neither shall ye have amongst  
 “ those nations repose, nor rest for the soles  
 “ of your feet; but the Lord shall give  
 “ thee there, a trembling heart, and failing  
 “ of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And thy  
 “ life shall hang in doubt before thee, and  
 “ thou shalt have no assurance of thy life.  
 “ In the morning thou shalt say, Would to  
 “ God it were even, and at even would it  
 “ were morning, for the fear with which thy  
 “ heart shall be agitated, and for the sight  
 “ which thine eyes shall see.” And well was

this fulfilled after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, and the city of Jerusalem, by the Romans; whence they were driven amidst all nations, even to the confines of the earth.

At what time was Israel seen to serve other gods, which they nor their fathers knew not, but when they were dispersed amongst Christians? when escaping by sea from Castile and Portugal, extremities of Europe, to the Eastern and Western Indies, the extremities of the earth, even in those parts were they, by cruel violence, forced to serve those who have been erroneously joined to the divine Majesty, and subjected to their idolatrous worship.

Surely herein, by the cruel persecution of the inquisition, did this prophecy meet its full

completion, and not elsewhere ; which is depicted by Moses in so lively a manner, that we must be blind indeed, not to perceive the likeness. In the twenty-ninth chapter, it says further, speaking of the extreme desolation of the holy land which we this day see, “ And all  
 “ the nations shall say, wherefore hath the  
 “ Lord dealt thus with this land ? What  
 “ meaneth the heat of this great anger ?  
 “ Then shall it be said, Because they have  
 “ forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of  
 “ their fathers, which he made with them,  
 “ when he brought them forth out of the land  
 “ of Egypt : for they went and served other  
 “ gods, and worshipped them, gods whom  
 “ they knew not,” &c. Here then, do we behold the fatal cause of the desolation of the kingdom of Israel, and of the present captivity. In the neglect of God’s law, promulgated in Sinai, and not in their refusal to receive another of novel invention, which teacheth to adore gods, untaught from that mount. Not in the circumstance of having slain a seducer who preached a god unknown to them ; and no where inculcated in the divine law they were possessed of ; as yourselves acknowledge. On the contrary, although their transgressions, which required chastisement were inveterate,  
 and



and continued for ages, yet what more immediately called down the execution of the destructive sentence, was the spreading of that pernicious sect, in the holy land, which then commenced in defiance to divine truth.

In that sublime poem, and compendious prophecy, which includes the whole series of events to happen to Israel, it is said, " They " sacrificed to demons not to God, to gods " whom they knew not, to new gods that " came newly up, whom your fathers feared " not." This follows the recital of the anti-ent idolatrous practices, and clearly characterises your system; for what other idolatry than yours, was that so novel, and remote from the imagination of our fathers, with which Israel was to become infected. Mark the evident and infallible consequence to be inferred from hence of the falsity of new gods; and say, (armed with such preservatives), what excuse would remain for us, in embracing the belief of a man, joined with another third person as God, even were miracles wrought to prove it?

#### E I G H T H.

Nay, if we only follow the light of reason and science, what can be more absurd and impossible

possible to conceive, than a plurality of persons in the unity of a divine essence. It is not possible, that one essence can appertain to individuals, who shall be really distinct. Surely if Abraham is a man, Isaac a man, and Jacob a man, they are three men; and thus in all other things. And therefore the Father being God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, they are three gods: and you attribute composition to the divinity, whose nature is most uncompounded. Either the Father comprehends all the existence, or not. If you grant the first part of the dilemma, the Father being infinite, there can be no other infinite, neither can another proceed from him equal to himself. If you grant the second, he were then defective: (for there can be no real distinction without a difference, and you maintain that the Son is really distinguishable from the Father, and the Spirit from both) There must then be something in the Son, which the Father hath not, and in the Holy Ghost somewhat uncontained in the other two persons; which being granted, it follows, that somewhat, must be either a perfection, or an imperfection. Choose which position you will, and it will prove that each are imperfect. If the distinction arises from an imperfection, this

is evident: and if from a perfection, which  
 soever person wants that perfection, resident in  
 the other, becomes imperfect. He whose be-  
 ing depends upon another, is necessarily infe-  
 rior to that other person, inasmuch as it is  
 more noble to bestow existence than to re-  
 ceive it; to be the cause, than the effect. If  
 the Son then depended on the Father, and  
 from him drew his being, as the Holy Ghost  
 from both; how can you pretend that they  
 are equal? If to beget is a perfection, the  
 Son and the Holy Ghost are imperfect, as be-  
 ing sterile. You will perhaps say, that the  
 Father contemplated himself abeterno, and  
 that this intellectual act was by means of  
 image or representation, (which must be a  
 substance, since no accident can have place in  
 respect to God) and thus, as has been pre-  
 tended by intelligence, was the son generated;  
 and in like manner, from the reciprocal love  
 of the Father and the Son, proceeded the Ho-  
 ly Ghost. Wretched fancies! It may suf-  
 fice to observe, in refutation of these mon-  
 strous conceptions, that they would lead us ne-  
 cessarily to grant an infinite succession of gods  
 by the intellectual contemplation of the three  
 persons, and their love for each other, which  
 could by no means be denied. Thus would  
 your

your blind theologists assimilate the divine to to human intellect, concluding, that as the one is determined by the image impressed on it, the other must likewise. But in truth, in the Deity, there is no distinction nor separation between the intelligence and his understanding. He is his wisdom, and his wisdom is himself, without any division. The blessed God requires no image, in which to contemplate himself, which he comprehends by his essence. Have you lost the memory of your own doctrine by which is taught, that the angels contemplate each other in themselves by their essence, and not by any image, as the celebrated master of your theology teaches in the ninth part of the second book against the Pagans : where he says, that the angels contemplate those of their own species by their essence ? If you acknowledge then this kind of intelligence in the angelic natures, how much more should you acknowledge it in the divine Majesty. Let this suffice of the many things which might be advanced to combat this triple-headed monster of the imagination.

#### N I N T H.

The incarnation of the divine Majesty, is impossible ; as it includes infinite contradictions.

ist.



1st. Amongst all creatures two natures cannot be united in one individual. V. gr. One individual substance cannot be at once an angel and a lion, a man and a stone; for the definition which should prove it to be the one, necessarily implies the negation of the other.

Between the divine and human nature, there is an infinitely greater repugnance to such union, than between created natures; for betwixt such the distance is finite, but between the divine nature and the human, it is infinite: the mixture of those natures, therefore, in one individual, is impossible.

2d. Did the blessed God inform a body, there would follow an infinite virtue in a finite quantity or substance, which cannot be; and it is with similar arguments, that your doctors, and in particular, your celebrated Thomas d'Aquinas prove, that the blessed God is not a body.

3d. It is impossible that the individual should extend itself beyond its nature; though nature may stretch beyond the powers of the individual; having under its laws many others. But it would be absolutely necessary to grant, were we to admit your suppositions, that either the individual substance in question, should extend itself to infinite greatness, or the

H divine

divine person streighten and limit himself; so that it should reach no farther than the sphere of the human body. Each of which, it were equally absurd to imagine.

4th. It would follow that God was subject to change, by the divine and singular substance, assuming a nature it had not before: nay more, that change must be called substantial by the acquirement of a new substantial nature, which before made no part of his essence.

5th. Human nature must become to him, both essential and accidental; essential, as the divine individuum must be comprehended under human nature, as under its species; and accidental, because such a junction would add something to it, which is the peculiar property of the accident. Now this implies a strong contradiction; for being essential, the human nature would be inseparable from, and indispensable to the Deity; and being accidental, at the same time, it could be separated and exist so.

6th. Actions and passions proceed from the individual, and not from his nature; as is unanimously the opinion of all the learned; therefore were the divine nature in a human form, all the actions and passions of which that form was the agent or object, must proceed from and be received by the divinity; the  
absurd

absurdity of which need not be developed, or dwelt on.

Finally, and omitting to avoid prolixity, many other reasons which prove the impossibility of this invention, let us only observe, that when the divine Majesty was about to give his most holy law to the children of Israel, he forbade the people, for three days before the time, to approach their wives; and not only so, in this instance, but whosoever had held commerce with a woman at other times, remained unfit to handle any of the holy things belonging to the sanctuary, till the sun went down, and they were cleansed. Inform us, how this can agree with the sojournment of the divinity in that unclean space, the commerce of which, for a time, incapacitated mankind from any communication with the Deity?

By the prophet Isaiah, he says unto his people under the present captivity, promising them freedom from the yoke of the nations, in order to preserve them from this infectious error, " Thus saith the Lord, that created thee, O Israel, and formed thee, O Jacob, " Fear not, for I am with thee. I will bring " thy seed from the East, and gather thee from " the West. I will say to the North, give

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" up,

“ up, and to the South, keep not back;  
 “ bring my sons from far. Ye are my wit-  
 “ nesses, saith the Lord, and my servant  
 “ whom I have chosen, that ye may know,  
 “ and believe me, and understand that I am  
 “ he. Before me there was no God formed,  
 “ neither shall there be after me.” If then  
 God had determined to become incarnate; or  
 if there existed any one with him, wherefore is  
 it not discovered; or rather, why is it so  
 strongly concealed and denied in this, and  
 other places, which are cited. The pronoun  
 I, is significant of the person, and is singular;  
 and it expressly says, besides this singular per-  
 son, there is no second, (neither bodily or spi-  
 ritual form, which participates in the divi-  
 nity). The prophet Hosea says, in chapter  
 xi. “ I am God, and not man; the holy  
 “ one in the midst of thee, and I will not en-  
 “ ter into the city.” Which intimates the im-  
 possibility of union betwixt human and divine  
 natures, and that God is totally separate from  
 all materiality.

By the prophet Ezekiel, it is pronounced  
 against the king of Tyre. “ Thus saith the  
 “ Lord God, Because thine heart is lifted  
 ‘ up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit  
 “ in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas :  
 “ yet



“ yet thou art a man and not God, though  
 “ thou set thine heart as the heart of God. Be-  
 “ hold, therefore, I will bring strangers upon  
 “ thee, the terrible of the nations, and they shall  
 “ draw their swords against the beauty of thy  
 “ wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness.  
 “ They shall bring thee down to the pit, and  
 “ thou shalt die the deaths of those who are  
 “ slain in the midst of the seas. Wilt thou  
 “ yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am  
 “ God? But thou shalt be a man and no  
 “ God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee.  
 “ Thou shalt die the death of the uncircum-  
 “ cised, by the hands of strangers, for I have  
 “ spoken it, saith the Lord God.” I cannot  
 avoid applying this discourse unto that man to  
 whom you attribute Godhead; and you will  
 see how it agrees in every point, to prove the  
 inanity and emptiness of your deceit: since  
 the presumptuous pride of the Tyrian king is  
 convicted by the impossibility of human and  
 divine being blended in one, by the experience  
 of his mortality; and still more, he is punished  
 by the violent death he suffered by the hand of  
 strangers, uncircumcised, and perverse. From  
 this striking conformity, may you perceive  
 what an erroneous thing it is to attribute God-  
 head to a man, who died a shameful death, by  
 the

the hands of the Romans, strangers, uncircumcised both in the flesh, and in the heart. Add to this, that the divine law says, "That he who is hanged is accursed of God." And blush for what your apostle Paul says, "Accursed of God is him that hangeth on a cross;" and that this man drew on himself this curse for you.

#### T E N T H.

Finally, exclusive of this, we have the express testimony of God himself by his prophets, that the Messiah is to be a man, and not God. Thus Ezekiel, chapter xxxiv. "Therefore saith the Lord unto them, &c. "I will save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey, and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up a Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepherd, but I the Lord will be unto you for God, and my servant David a prince among them. I the Lord have spoken it." By the common consent of the Jewish and Christian expositors, the shepherd here mentioned is the Messiah, called David, as a descendant of that monarch, who died about four hundred years

years prior to the prophecy of Ezekiel. This being granted, how wilful must your blindness be to resist so clear a light, when it is said, "The Messiah shall be your Shepherd, but the Lord shall be God;" and farther on, to elucidate what is meant by Shepherd, it says, "That the Messiah shall be the servant of God, and a Prince, and inhabitant amongst the children of Israel." As in chapter xxxvii. we find, "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land. And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one King shall be King to them all. And they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor their abominations, nor with any of their transgressions, &c. And I will purify them, so shall they be my people and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be King over them, and they shall have one Shepherd; they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given

“ given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your  
 “ fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell  
 “ therein, even they and their children, and  
 “ their children’s children for ever: and my  
 “ servant David shall be their Prince for  
 “ ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of  
 “ peace with them, and I will place them  
 “ and multiply them, and will set my sanctu-  
 “ ary in the midst of them for evermore.  
 “ My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea,  
 “ I will be their God, and they shall be my  
 “ people. And the heathen shall know that I  
 “ the Lord,” &c.

Altho’ there be many irrefragable arguments  
 against your fictions deducible from this pro-  
 phesy, since until this day we have not seen  
 the accomplishment of any event here pro-  
 mised, a tittle of which cannot fail: yet what I  
 chiefly propose to shew by citing it, to all who  
 choose to see, is, that it is expressly taught  
 that the Messiah is not to be God, since the  
 Lord says, “ I will be unto them for God,  
 “ and my servant David shall be King and  
 “ Shepherd over them.” The same doth the  
 prophet Hosea tell us, chapter iii. “ That  
 “ many days Israel shall be without princes  
 “ or priest; without statues, ephod, or tera-  
 “ phim.” Which times are doubtless those of  
 the



the present captivity, in which alone these things have failed Israel; for kings and princes have we none: the sacrifices of the holy temple have ceased: the statues to which the ten tribes offered are no more: neither have they any one to inform them of future events at their request, by the lawful solution of the High Priest, by means of the breast-plate; or by the illicit and superstitious practice of consulting idolatrous oracles and images. But the prophet proceeds, "Afterwards shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their King." That is, with a perfect heart (as antiently in the days of David and Solomon) which is the true means of seeking the Lord. And likewise without true penitence they may desire, but cannot truly be said to seek, the coming of the Messiah. Can any rational understanding bear the supposition, that the divine law, so exact to manifest such various and minute particulars, should not contain even a hint, nor a short recommendation, much less a distinct declaration of this boasted chimera of the incarnation? Can we suppose that God would deceive his beloved people? Wherefore was it not said, My people, I send you my Son, who is to descend to earth:

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give

give him a kind reception, &c. But you are truly the descendants of those who holding Jupiter as their supreme deity, yet believed his descent under the figure of a bull to ravish Europa, daughter of Agenor, king of Phenicia, and that he begat Hercules of Alemena; as likewise that Romulus and Rœmus were the progeny of Mars by a vestal virgin; and many similar tales. Neither can it occasion any surprize, that understandings accustomed to like vanities should assent to the story of a virgin, impregnated by a God, and bringing forth another; but we must at the same time advert to the origin of all such inventions, which doubtless was the desire of concealing irregular or incestuous amours, whence it was instilled into the heads of the ignorant, that the fruit of such acts were conceived from gods. Thus truly does the wise man say, that the simple believes every thing.

#### ELEVENTH.

What can be imagined more irrational and incompatible with all ideas of divine wisdom, or more repugnant to divine rectitude and justice, more contrary to the infinite mercy of God, than that to expiate a lesser sin, the commission of a much greater should be found

found necessary: or as you would have it, of the greatest that ever was committed in the world; as if the vassal who had disobeyed his king, should have no other means of obtaining pardon for his disobedience, than that of slaying the son of the same king. It is a received axiom amongst you, that evil may not be committed, in order that good should follow; and God himself says, he abhors an offering made of things taken by violence. Besides, either the divine law must make express mention that God would send to the world a son or descendant of his, giving signs to know him, or not. If you say the first, shew us in which place; if the second, what crime did the Jews commit in slaying a man, who called himself God? if it were necessary that person should die a violent death; but that the Jews were under obligation to acknowledge him, we must suppose that God abhorring the lesser evil, although conducive to a good end, had thus ordered that his death should be caused by the Romans, who then governed in the holy land; who not being professors of the divine law, were not obligated to acknowledge him; and that thus a sin, so great as you alledge, might not fall upon his beloved people. Besides, since that

man descended by the decree of heaven to suffer a violent death, which was become indispensable to save the human species, there could lie no blame on his murderers, as they must have done it by the destiny and force of heaven: for if there had not been a force to violate, and necessitate their wills, the salvation of mankind would have remained in risk and doubt; for clearly, if there had been none to slay him, he had come in vain. Finally, if he came assuredly to die crucified, and that on such death depended your salvation, which flows from thence, you have cause to thank the Jews much, for aiding in such a work, and not to complain continually of their having slain your God.

#### T W E L F T H.

If that man by his death expiated the sin of Adam, the pains imposed in consequence thereof, should have necessarily ceased; some of which were visible, others invisible. Let us suspend our judgment with respect to the invisible, and treat solely of the visible. You will scarcely deny that among these penalties denounced, was the corporeal death to Adam and his descendants: the stimulus to sin and evil inclination of the irrational appetites.

That



That of eating their bread by the sweat of their brow, the curse of the earth, and the difficulty and pangs of women in child-bearing. All these inflictions are not merely continued in the world, posterior to the death of that man, but it even seems degenerated in these points; and thus was the death of that man of no avail, and his life fruitless, if not of infinite prejudice. The life of man, from Adam to Noah, was nine hundred years; from that time forward it was shortened: and since the death of the person in question, life is become of still shorter duration, than in any former age. The temptation to sin still subsists, and brutal appetites are not less unbridled; since we see the kingdoms and nations of the world divided into various discordant sects; among whom rage perpetual and sanguinary wars and seditions; whilst man abounds with all the perversions of inordinate transgressions: neither doth man earn his bread with less trouble, and the earth has proved even less generous and happy in its productions. You will therefore willingly turn from the contemplations of these visible punishments still unreprieved, towards the invisible; where, indeed, neither of us can produce any testimony. The cessation of which, we cannot readily give you credit for,

till

till you afford us some proof of the alleviation of those which are but too manifest. Behold then, what a wretched satisfaction was rendered by the death of that person, which hath by no means prevailed to lighten our burthens. But the Messiah, whom we expect, and who is to liberate Israel from the present captivity, and restore the kingdom of the house of David, (not to expiate the sin of Adam) by him will the blessed God work such a reformation in the world, that life will be of longer duration; the inclination to transgress with the suggestions of brutal appetite be curbed under the yoke of reason, and the earth become most fertile in its productions, with less of human toil; joined to various other felicities spiritual and corporeal, we have reason to hope for, as I could prove from various authorities; but shall only detain you to observe three or four. As Isaiah lxxv. " And " I will rejoice with Jerusalem, and joy with " my people; the voice of weeping shall be " no more heard in her, &c. There shall be " no more thence an infant of days, nor an " old man that hath not completed his " days; for the child shall die a hundred years " old; but the sinner of one hundred years " shall be accursed." So, that he who shall die

at

at a hundred years of age, shall be accounted to die in infancy. And then lower it says,  
 “ For as the leaves of a tree shall be the  
 “ days of my people.”

In Ezekiel xxxvi. “ I will take you from  
 “ among the heathen, and gather you out of  
 “ all countries, and will bring you into your  
 “ own land. Then will I pour pure waters  
 “ upon you, and you shall be cleansed from  
 “ all your impurities, &c. A new heart also  
 “ will I give you, and a new spirit I will put  
 “ within you, and cause you to walk in my  
 “ statutes, and ye shall keep and execute them,  
 “ &c. I will call for the corn and increase,  
 “ and lay no famine upon you, and I will  
 “ multiply the fruit of the tree, the increase  
 “ of the field,” &c.

Behold, how after the coming of the Mes-  
 siah life will be extremely long, and the irre-  
 gularities of human appetite restrained by rea-  
 son. That mankind will be reconciled to the  
 perfect observance of the divine law, attended  
 with the amelioration of the fruits of the  
 earth, which shall not be confined to the peo-  
 ple of Israel, but diffused to all through their  
 means; as Isaiah says, chapter ii. “ And it  
 “ shall be in the end of days, (that is to say,  
 “ of the captivity) that the mountain of  
 “ the

“ the Lord’s house shall be established in the  
 “ top of the mountains, and shall be exalted  
 “ above the hills, and all nations shall flow  
 “ unto it, and many people shall say, Come,  
 “ let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to  
 “ the house of the God of Jacob, and he  
 “ will shew us his ways, and we will walk in  
 “ his paths ; for out of Sion shall go forth  
 “ the law, and the word of the Lord from  
 “ Jerusalem : and he shall judge betwixt the  
 “ nations, and shall rebuke many people, and  
 “ they shall beat their swords to plough-  
 “ shares, and their spears into pruning hooks.  
 “ Nation shall not lift up sword against na-  
 “ tion, neither shall they learn war any  
 “ more.”

By the prophet Zephaniah ; “ For then, I  
 “ will render to the people a sure language,  
 “ that they invoke the name of the Lord to  
 “ serve him with one consent, and in one  
 “ mode, as with one heart, and one under-  
 “ standing.” By these considerations, are  
 overthrown the basis of your interpretation,  
 and application, of the chapter in question;  
 and thus is it proved, that it can no way be  
 construed to favour your purpose.

APPEN-



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## A P P E N D I X.

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**T**HE insertion of the three last verses of the fifty-second, and the whole of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, will render more clear, what is to be advanced on the subject.

### CHAPTER LII.

Ver. 13. Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high.

14. As many were astonished at thee ; (his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men).

15. So shall he make many nations speak, kings shall shut their mouths before him, for that which had not been told them, they shall see, and that which they had not heard, shall they consider.

K

CHAP.

CHAPTER LIII.

Ver. 1. Who shall believe our report?  
and over-whom is the arm of the Lord manifested?

2. For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; for when we saw him, his sight did not appear desirable.

3. Despised is he, and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and accustomed to infirmities; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4. Surely he hath borne our infirmities, and supported our sorrows; whilst we esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we were healed.

6. We all went astray like sheep, and each looked towards his own way, and the Lord hath lain upon him the iniquity of us all.

7. Oppressed and afflicted was he, yet he opened not his mouth: as a lamb he was led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers

shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8. He was taken from confinement, and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut out of the land of the living. For the transgression of my people were they stricken.

9. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, although he had done no violence, nor was deceit in his mouth.

10. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, and shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

11. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, and their iniquities shall he bear.

12. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with transgressors: and he bare the sin of

many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

It will be necessary to premise, that the chief difficulty of translating the Hebrew, and more particularly the prophetic writers, lies in the boldness of the Oriental style, when compared to the tameness of an European language. The Hebrew may be compared to an Arabian courser, who rushing impetuously towards its object, disdainfully overleaps the flight bounds of grammatical accuracy, and seems to join in his rapid course, spaces whose distance the eye can scarcely measure. Whilst the Northern tongues, are like the managed horse, who keeps one slow and regular pace, and servilely takes a circuitous road, to avoid the slightest obstacle which appears to impede his progress. Nothing is more common in the sacred writings, than the sudden transitions of person, time, and place; and the use of one tense for the other, is every where met with. Now unless the translator be aware of this, and can enter into the spirit of the inspired writers, he will be frequently in danger of placing sentiments in the mouth of the divinity himself, where they are, perhaps, quoted only to be reprobated. A sedulous

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attention to the context, will greatly clear away the doubts which encumber any passage, and it is frequently by that alone, that the sense can be determined. However, the prophecy of Isaiah now under consideration is by no means obscure; for when interpreted of the people of Israel, and not of a Messiah, the whole becomes not only consistent, but strikingly just, as far as we can yet trace its accomplishment.

The prophet, in the preceding verses, had predicted the joyful restoration of Israel; and in continuation of the subject, here delineates the surprize, with which the nations will behold that unexpected event, and informs us what sentiments they will express, on this manifestation of the divine glory, over a people whom they had held in such perfect contempt; and the final exaltation of whom, they had either not been informed of, or disbelieved. The expression of "My servant," and the repetition of the third person singular, throughout this prophecy, ought not to mislead, since the title of "My servant," applied by the Almighty, to the people of Israel, is frequent in Scripture, and is found in passages too numerous to need particular reference.

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It is likewise not at all unusual to speak of that collective body, as of an individual, as in this chapter, "A man of sorrows;" for we read in Judges, chap. xx. verse 22. "And the man Israel (or of Israel) encouraged himself." Again, in the twenty-first chapter, 1st verse, "And the man Israel had sworn in Mispah." In the 1st book of Samuel, eighteenth chapter, ver. 2. "And Saul, and the man Israel." In all these places, the English translation gives it in the plural, men; and with no greater licence, it might here be rendered, men of sorrow and acquainted with infirmities. There is peculiar energy in representing the afflictions of a whole people, as that of an individual; and we have sufficient reason, from various parts of this prophecy, to guard us from the absurdity of taking this, as if it were literally spoken of one person, and not of a collective body. Indeed, if any inconsistency were too great for a Trinitarian, I should be surprized at their application of the expression, "My servant," to the person they adore.

But to proceed with our exposition.

The 13th verse holds forth four kind of rewards, which shall crown the long and patient sufferings of Israel, namely, knowledge  
by

by means of the divine law, the restored dignity of our kingdom, the renewal of the gift of prophecy; and lastly, the particular protection of the most High, which I could prove more at large from the import of the Hebrew words, translated; "He shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high." In the 14th and 15th verses is expressed, the astonishment of all nations, to behold our redemption! the admiration with which they will then speak of us, and the respect they will then observe towards a people, who before had made so contemptible a figure. In the 1st, 2d, and 3d verse of the fifty-third chapter, their wonder breaks out at this sudden exaltation, by the hand of God, of a people, in whose countenances nought but shame and dejection had appeared during their long dispersion. This is represented as unlooked for, as the sudden springing up of a plant in a dry and barren soil. Here the despised state of Israel is painted with a masterly hand, and those peculiarities of feature and complexion, pointed out, which in Northern countries, by betraying our origin, expose us to contemptuous neglect, or unmerited reproach. All this, appears strikingly just, if meant of Israel,

rael, but can find no such application to the supposed Messiah; for we are no where informed that his visage was disfigured, or uncomely, so as to occasion repeated marks of contempt. In the fourth verse, the nations exclaim, that surely Israel had borne the punishment of all their sins and idolatries, whilst they had imagined that God had justly afflicted him, for refusing to embrace their fancies. The fifth is expressive of the cruelties and oppressions which they confess to have exercised over our unfortunate nation, avenging on them, the offences received from each other, and punishing them for sins they never committed; so that they were at no time secure from oppression; for in the tranquil moments of each nation, when they breathed from war, their counsels were directed how to exact greater fines, and exercise greater cruelties on the unhappy Jews, rendering the halcyon days of peace, equally fatal to them with those of battle. Need I exemplify this by a reference to the bloody annals of Eastern despots, to the infernal Chronicles of Castilian and Portuguese superstition, or to the dark pages of British history, where you will find how continually, on occasions of rejoicing (as the peaceable coronation of a king,

or



or the celebration of some religious festival) numbers of our ill-fated ancestors were massacred in cool blood? Need I repeat how others were sacrificed to a blind indignation for fancied transgressions, the commission of which, was not only untrue, but impossible? How peace has been frequently made between contending parties, by the surrender of the lives and fortunes of our innocent people to popular fury and rapacity? How the deepest wounds inflicted by wasteful wars, have been healed by the exaction and extortion of vast sums from our fathers, however hardly earned by industry in trade, which they alone cultivated amidst ferocious and indolent nations? Thus strictly and truly hath the chastisement of their peace been upon Israel, and by his stripes have they been healed. The nations proceed to relate in the sixth and seventh verses how far they had wandered from the truth, in their religious doctrines whilst all their crimes seemed to be lain upon Israel; and confess the unparalleled patience and submission with which the Jews had borne to be carried like lambs to the slaughter, and like sheep to be sheared. A truth this worthy of remark, that all the Jews in whatever coun-

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try dispersed, have submitted with scarce a murmur, and without any rebellion or sedition, to the infliction of the most unexampled oppressions and cruelties. Of this we have a recent instance in the frightful destruction and pillage exercised on them and their hapless families, by the inhuman monster who reigns in Morocco. This submission where their numbers are few may be accounted for, by the imbecility of their condition. But this reasoning cannot be admitted in respect to kingdoms, where they bear a great proportion to the natives; as in Barbary, many parts of Turkey, Egypt, &c. and formerly in Spain.

Neither can we suppose that natural feeling, the impulse of self-defence, and the desire of revenge, can all be totally suppressed in their breasts. This conduct must therefore be attributed to an inward and profound conviction, that no mortal hand can avail to terminate our misfortunes; and that it becomes us to bear with fortitude, those inflictions which our own transgressions have merited. Notwithstanding the impiety of many individuals amongst us, we may be allowed to hope that the patient endurance of captivity

vity and oppression, which is commanded by God, may have some merit in his sight to approximate the period of our deliverance. For in the eighth verse the prophet proceeds to promise, that in consequence of this forbearance, the generation of this people (however unexpected the event) shall be rescued from their confinement and condemnation, although they had been once driven out of the holy land, called in scriptural language, the land of living. Moreover, God declares that the punishments of Israel were for his own iniquities, for which God had long denounced this chastisement, and not for those imputed to them by different nations. I have followed as closely as possible the English translation, (though not the most accurate) but in this verse, the error was too visible, in saying, for the transgression of my people was he stricken; for literally it is, in the original, for the transgression of my people, (was this) chastisement to them. The word *Lamo* in the Hebrew is used instead of *La-bēm*, as more poetical, but is likewise plural, and is thus rendered in English, in other passages, as Exodus, chapter xv. verse 9th, " My desire shall be satisfied upon them; I

“ will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy  
 “ them !” The 9th verse relates how un-  
 justly the people of Israel had been con-  
 demned for offences of which they were  
 not culpable ; and doubtless the prejudices of  
 enraged multitudes who abhorred them, has  
 but too frequently verified this prediction.  
 It likewise declares, they had been often mur-  
 dered under the sanction of judicial forms, to  
 obtain the forfeiture of their riches. Let  
 the inquisition confess how true this charge,  
 as well as the tyrants of the East, where no  
 innocence of conduct and manners can shelter  
 a man from the punishment of that dread-  
 ful crime, the possession of riches. The  
 three last verses proclaim, that as from the  
 Lord proceeded his woes ; so after a true  
 penitence and humiliation of soul, his gene-  
 ration shall survive, and be the instruments  
 of salvation to mankind. That they shall  
 prolong their days, and see their dearest wish  
 accomplished ; that is, the introduction of  
 the true knowledge of God’s power, and his  
 unity, amongst the nations. Moreover, that  
 by the means of his righteous servant Isra-  
 el, shall many be converted unto the true  
 faith, and be induced to forsake the vani-  
 ties



ties of their false doctrines, whilst Israel shall have the charge of interceding for pardon of all their iniquities; that is, as being the most religious and holy people, they shall take upon them the spiritual observation of the law: for, in the same sense, and with the same phrase, Moses says to Aaron, in Numbers chapter xviii. verse 1. "Thou and thy sons, and thy father's house with thee, shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary; and thou and thy sons with thee, shall bear the iniquity of the priesthood."

God likewise declares the felicity and pre-eminence Israel shall enjoy in return for his submission, to the culpable vexations exercised on him by many nations, by divine permission; since he had not only forborne to rebel against them, but had continued to pray for the welfare of each government, under which his numbers were placed, agreeable to his command, and which is known to have been undeviatingly our practice.

When this chapter is attentively read, and its connection traced with the preceding and following one; I trust the interpretation here offered, will be found rational and consistent. I have not detained myself to prove how much it would  
appear

appear the contrary in its usual application, nor to enquire how it can be said of the Christian Messiah, that he should see his seed and prolong his days, &c. Without anticipating objections, I submit it to the candour of the impartial and dispassionate few, who are not afraid to follow the truth wherever it may lead them. For I did not think elegance of language, or variety of arguments at all requisite to support the plain truths I had to advance on this chapter of Isaiah. I hope I may be permitted to advert with more of pleasantry than asperity to the extreme readiness of Christians, to leave us in undisturbed possession of all the evils foretold us, and which we at present experience, whilst they kindly interpret of themselves those pleasing promises, which hold forth with equal certainty, the felicity of our latter days. These prophecies of our final restoration are so clear, and accompany so continually those of our present misfortunes, that I should be inclined to expect, that those convinced by their own knowledge of the one, would no longer deny us the other.

I cannot avoid here submitting to consideration, the impropriety of the words prefixed

in the English bible to each chapter as the contents, but which (particularly in respect to the prophets) seldom correspond with the intent thereof, and can only serve to mislead those who are unable to compare them.

Whatever may be thought of this, I hope no liberal man of any profession will blame the freedom of discussion, observed throughout this brief discourse, lest it should seem that such a complainant professed a creed, incapable to sustain inquiry, and supported solely, by the force of prejudice, and the impenetrability of mystery.

F I N I S.

in the British Bible to each chapter in the  
 context, but which (as usually is the  
 case) is not to be taken out of the  
 context thereof, and can only live in a natural  
 sense who are unable to compare them.  
 However, I have thought of this, I hope  
 the liberal man of any profession will dissent  
 the freedom of discussion, of which I have  
 out this brief notice, it is hardly less  
 than that a country which is a great  
 increase to human knowledge, and supported  
 solely by the force of prejudice, and the im-  
 possibility of any other.



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